

## ABSTRACT

A novel method of treating and preventing diseases is provided. In particular, compositions and methods of blocking diseases associated with aberrant levels of nitric  
oxide and facilitated by a serine proteolytic (SP) activity are disclosed, which consist of  
administering to a subject a therapeutically effective amount of a compound having a  
serine protease inhibitory activity. Among effective compounds are  $\alpha_1$ -antitrypsin and  
synthetic drugs mimicking some or all of the actions of  $\alpha_1$ -antitrypsin.

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